



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tioga-Hammond and Cowanesque Lakes begin helmet loaner program

Thanks to a generous donation from a local biking club, kids visiting the campgrounds at Tioga-Hammond and Cowanesque Lakes are a little safer. After seeing the recurring problem of young children riding their bikes without helmets, Park Ranger Steve Sporer decided to take action.

Sporer approached fellow Corps of Engineers employee Chris Heichel, an avid bicyclist, to see if his biking club would be interested in assisting with the effort to get kids to wear their helmets while recreating at Tioga-Hammond and Cowanesque Lakes. Heichel and his club, the Tioga County Ridge Riders Bicycle Club, came through in a big way. The club donated eight bicycle helmets with which the ranger staff has instituted a loaner program for kids who are camping at the campground and may have left their helmet at home.

In the past, rangers would have to stop children under the age of 12 from riding bikes in the park if they didn't have a helmet. Pennsylvania state law requires children under 12 to wear a helmet while riding a bicycle. Now children and their parents can go to the Ives Run Visitor Information Center or the Tompkins Campground office and borrow a helmet for the duration of their stay.

The ranger staff at Tioga-Hammond and Cowanesque Lakes encourages bicyclists of all ages to wear a helmet. According to statistics from the U.S. Department of Transportation, helmets are 85 to 88 percent effective in preventing or lessening brain injuries. Each year approximately 400,000 children under the age of 14 are treated for bicycle related injuries.

For more information on the Helmet Loaner Program, please contact the Ives Run Visitor Information Center at 570-835-5281. For more information on the Tioga County Ridge Riders Bicycle Club visit their website at www.tiogacountyridgeriders.com.

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